

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

By this amendment, Claim 1 was amended to recite that the array of pins comprises a vacant site with no pin thereat "in the midst of the array of pins" and that the array of holes comprises a block site "in the midst of the array of holes." Claim 1 was further amended to recite that the plug element cannot be combined with the socket element if the array of pins is shifted from the correct alignment with the array of holes up to one half of the array sites. Support can be found throughout the specification and specifically in lines 1-6 of paragraph [0016] and lines 11-15 of paragraph [0017]. Claims 9-18 are added. Support can be found in the entire specification, including original claims 1-8, and paragraphs [0008], [0016], [0017], and Table 2. Favorable consideration is respectfully requested for the currently pending claims.

In the Office Action, the examiner rejected claims 1-8 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the admitted prior art in view of Pretchel et al. (US 4,725,243). Neither the admitted prior art nor Pretchel et al., however, discloses or suggests the arrangement of the vacant site of the array of pins or block site of the array of holes in the midst of the array. The term "midst" is defined to be "the interior or central part or point" (Websters Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary).

Further, in the admitted prior art or Pretchel et al, the plug element can be prevented from successful combination with the socket element only when the plug element is incorrectly oriented or the array of pins is just slightly shifted from the correct alignment with the array of holes. Once the array of pins is shifted from the correct alignment with the array of holes to a little further extent, i.e. averting the polarizing key, which is probably unnoticed by the user, the plug element and the socket element can be successfully but undesirably connected.

Based on the above description, allowance of all pending claims 1-18 is respectfully requested. If there are any remaining issues preventing allowance of the pending claims that may be clarified by telephone, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned.

Appl. No. 10/672,459
Amdt. dated August 23, 2004
Reply to Office Action of April 22, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. R. Witt", written over a horizontal line.

Evan R. Witt
Reg. No. 32,512
Attorney for Applicant

Date: August 23, 2004

MADSON & METCALF
Gateway Tower West
15 West South Temple, Suite 900
Salt Lake City, Utah 84101
Telephone: 801/537-1700